DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 109 634 CS 002 036

| | |
|---|---|
| TITLE | Teaching Comprehension Skills. |
| INSTITUTION | Georgia Association of School Superintendents.; Georgia State Dept. of Education, Atlanta.; Georgia Univ., Athens. Coll. of Education. |
| PUB DATE | 64 |
| NOTE | 56p. |
| EDRS PRICE | MF-$0.76 HC-$3.32 PLUS POSTAGE |
| DESCRIPTORS | Content Reading; Directed Reading Activity; Elementary Education; Informal Reading Inventory; *Reading Comprehension; *Reading Instruction; Reading Skills; *Teaching Techniques |

ABSTRACT

Materials used in a one-day conference on teaching reading comprehension skills are summarized in this publication. Contents consist of three articles on teaching the comprehension skills, informal reading inventories in science and in geography, Lincoln's Gettysburg Address with comprehension questions, a checklist for the evaluation of teaching practices related to reading in content areas, and a list of possible actions as a followup of the conference. (JM)

**********
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
**********

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

ED109634

# TEACHING COMPREHENSION SKILLS

A Part of

The Superintendent's Research
and Educational Development Program

Sponsored by

Georgia Association of School Superintendents
Georgia Department of Education
College of Education, the University of Georgia

1964

CS 002 036

# FOREWORD

Materials used in a one-day conference on "Teaching the Comprehension Skills" are summarized in this publication. The conference was the last of three educational development days for selected school systems. The first two conferences focused attention on helping poor readers and on teaching word recognition skills.

This conference and the two earlier ones were parts of the Superintendent's Research and Educational Development Program, a cooperative effort of the Georgia Association of School Superintendents, the Georgia State Department of Education, and the University of Georgia's College of Education. Doyne M. Smith, of the University of Georgia, and Allen Smith, of the Georgia State Department of Education, furnished the major leadership for SREDP. The organization that the Superintendent uses for improving instruction and furnishing needed information on strengths and weaknesses in various instructional areas to the Superintendent are the primary concerns of SREDP. In this instance, the focus is on the teaching of reading.

I.E. Aaron, Byron Callaway, and Hazel D. Simpson, of the College of Education, the University of Georgia, planned this conference and prepared materials used with those attending. The various parts of the program were presented by one or more of these three persons or by Doyne M. Smith. The Area Representative, State Department of Education, was responsible for the mechanics of organizing this meeting.

This bulletin was prepared in the hope that it will aid teachers attending the conference in reporting to their school faculties. Distribution will be limited, for the most part, to school systems participating in these conferences.

# AN OVERVIEW OF TEACHING THE COMPREHENSION SKILLS

**I.E.Aaron**

The development of comprehension skills is one of the most important outcomes of a good reading program. Much time should be spent in teaching word recognition techniques, but the teacher must remember that word recognition is merely a means to the ends of comprehension and appreciation. The teaching job is not complete if the reader knows only how to pronounce the words. The words, sentences, and paragraphs must be understood, or the process is not reading.

## *Some General Comments*

(1) *Instruction must be aimed directly toward teaching the comprehension skills if they are to be developed adequately.* The teaching of the comprehension skills cannot be left to chance. The teacher must aim instruction toward the development of all of the many skills of comprehension. Some children will develop a few of the abilities on their own, but the complete job will not be done unless someone plans for it. A good reader needs all of the techniques for comprehending, and the teacher must set up the reading program in such a way that all of these skills will be developed. This involves teaching in developmental reading and in the various subjects.

(2) *Comprehension is not one but a combination of many skills.* Just as word recognition is made up of many different skills, so is comprehension. The teacher aims toward developing a reader who can read for varying degrees of comprehension – to get details when needed, to obtain the main idea, to evaluate what he reads, and so on. The good reader uses a variety of skills. He reads for a variety of purposes, and he varies his reading techinques and speed of reading with his purpose. There are at least twenty different comprehension skills, and all of them should be taught.

(3) *Plans should be made for frequent use of a comprehension skill that has been taught.* When a new comprehension skill is introduced, the teacher should plan for immediate use of that skill in reading. It is likely that for most children only a superficial development will occur unless the teacher plans specifically for periodic use. By setting the stage through assignments and motivating questions, the teacher should lead the children into use of the skill. Practice is necessary for solid growth.

(4) *Adequate time must be taken to check comprehension and to teach the comprehension skills in basal reading classes.* One of the major purposes of basal reading instruction is to develop competence in comprehension. As a story is taught to a group of children, adequate time must be given to the full development of the comprehension skills.

Teacher's guidebooks that accompany basal readers use lesson-plan patterns of from three to seven phases. These usually follow about the same patterns, with the variation occurring mostly in the names of the steps and the divisions between them. The following six-phase plan will show how comprehension fits into the teaching of a directed reading lesson:

a. Developing readiness. (At the beginning of a selection, the teacher attempts to give oral control of any vocabulary words likely to cause difficulty, to build a background for understanding the story, to get the children interested in reading the selection, and to set a purpose for the initial reading of the selection.)
b. Directed silent reading. (With the teacher standing by, pupils read the selection silently. The teacher gives on-the-spot help on word recognition or tells children troublesome words.)
c. Comprehension check and skill building. (Usually as soon as the silent reading is completed, the teacher checks on comprehension and attempts to teach the comprehension skills. This is an important phase and should be developed adequately.)
d. Word recognition skill building. (Most of the teaching of word recognition skills comes in this phase.)
e. Purposeful rereading. (Having children reread for another purpose also is instruction aimed toward the development of comprehension skills. The purposes for rereading are varied in order to develop a number of comprehension skills as well as some oral reading skills.)
f. Follow-up activities. (All lessons do not have follow-up activities, but often they do. In this phase some of the activities may revolve around the further development of some of the comprehension skills.)

Usually two or three days, sometimes longer, are used in teaching a story to a given group of children. Adequate time must be taken to develop well the comprehension and other skills that are to be taught in developmental reading. As may be noted, the teaching of the comprehension skills occurs in all steps except that dealing with word recognition skill building. Even in that phase it is likely that word meanings are also developed. In the readiness step, the teacher develops word meanings and builds concept background where necessary for understanding the

selection. The transition from phase one to phase two is aimed at establishing a purpose for reading. To accomplish this, the teacher may make statements similar to the following: "Now I want you to read the story to see if you think Uncle Jack was wise in what he did." "Let's read this selection rapidly to get the main ideas the writer wanted us to get." "As you read the story, watch for examples of colorful language the writer uses. We will go back to these examples later." "I wonder if you will be as surprised as I was when you find why Billy was afraid to go into the cellar." The establishment of a purpose for reading makes a smooth transition from the readiness to the directed silent reading phase.

The bulk of the initial instruction on comprehension skills comes during the comprehension check and skill building phase. By the questions the teacher raises, by the situations he develops, the teacher helps the children to grow in comprehension power. Sometimes shorter selections and more discussion time are needed. In these periods of discussion following the silent reading of a selection, the teacher must see that the children understand the literal – and sometimes figurative – meaning of the selection. He must be on his guard to raise questions that lead the children into thinking as they read.

As the teacher develops purposes for rereading, different from the one originally set in the readiness period, he is teaching the children to read for various reasons. These purposes should differ from time to time in order to help children to see that we read for a variety of reasons, and how we read will vary with the particular purpose we have in mind.

The plan described is the type a teacher would use with one subgroup in a classroom. If children are reading on several different difficulty levels, as we find in most elementary classrooms, the teacher would follow a pattern similar to the one described earlier with each of the subgroups.

(5) *Adequate time must be taken in each subject-matter class to teach the reading skills related to that subject.* A pupil may know the basal reading skills and still have difficulty in comprehending reading matter in a particular subject. Each teacher has the obligation of teaching the children the reading skills that are related to his subject. The high school physics teacher is the one who needs to teach students to read physics texts and how to read formulas related to physics. The history teacher is the person who has the responsibility for building the background needed for understanding historical materials and for teaching the special vocabulary used in history. The elementary teacher in the self-contained classroom must take on several roles. As he moves from developmental reading to geography, he must teach the geography vocabulary, how to read maps and

globes, and so on. Then he moves into instruction in arithmetic, thus necessitating the teaching of the vocabulary peculiar to arithmetic and how to read word problems. These special reading skills can be taught effectively only by the teacher who teaches the particular subject of which they are a part.

The content-area reading skill responsibilities can be summarized in the following five teaching jobs:

a. Teaching the specialized vocabulary. (Each subject has its own special vocabulary. Children must know the meanings of these special words if they are to understand what they read.)
b. Building the background for understanding the material. (Content subjects often are heavily loaded with concepts. By taking time to develop some of these concepts in advance and checking on an understanding of others after the children have read the selection, the teacher can assure comprehension of what is read in that subject.)
c. Teaching the children how to read the materials effectively. (Students need to be taught to read texts and other materials efficiently and effectively. If there are any "best ways" of reading a particular type of material, the content-area teacher should teach these "best ways" to the children. Sometimes an approach similar to the SQ3R is effective.)
d. Reading special symbols of the subject. (In mathematics, in proofreading in English, in reading maps, in reading the sciences, children must be taught the symbols necessary for understanding each of these particular types of content.)
e. Reading maps, graphs, charts, and other special types of reading. (The teacher whose subject includes charts, graphs, and maps is responsible for teaching the students to read these special types of materials.)

The content-area teacher also has another responsibility related to his or her field. Some pupils – quite a few – in the typical classroom are sufficiently disabled in reading to find the reading of texts on their grade level extremely difficult or almost impossible. And, then, there are some – a few – who find very little challenge in grade-level texts because they are such excellent readers. The subject-matter teacher must be concerned with bringing students into contact with books that suit their varied reading levels.

The good reader who needs more challenge may be encouraged to build

greater depth in the subject. More advanced treatments in other texts, use of encyclopedias, encouragement of wider or deeper reading related to the topic – these are a few possibilities.

The poor readers present an entirely different problem. The teacher's challenge here is to locate material on the subject that the child can read. For those children who are average or above in intelligence but are poor readers, the teacher may depend less upon reading and more upon other avenues of learning. Hearing others report on readings, viewing movies and filmstrips, and watching television programs are ways the poor reader may obtain information without having to read about it. However, attempts still should be made to obtain books on the subject that he *can* read. And somewhere, somehow in the school day, somebody should devote some time to teaching these poor readers the basic skills they lack in reading. We cannot expect the very poor readers to understand concepts they meet in books that they cannot read.

(6) *Comprehension skills must be taught in material children can read.* Comprehension skills should be taught in books and other materials that are challenging but not frustrating to children. If the books are too difficult, the child is frustrated. If the books are too easy, the child is not challenged. In either case, growth in reading is limited or non-existent. An informal check may be made of materials to see if they are suited in difficulty level to the children. Such an inventory has previously been described and demonstrated for you at an earlier conference. Many of these comprehension skills are taught in subject-matter texts, and it is just as important to bet texts of suitable difficulty levels in content areas as it is in developmental reading.

(7) *The teacher sets the stage for the kind of reading children do.* Children's reading in school is governed largely by the types of questions teachers ask. If the teacher always asks factual questions, the children will read only for facts. If the teacher asks different types of questions, the children will read for a variety of purposes, thus using a variety of techniques. The teacher should plan his instruction in such a way that children are taught to use all of the comprehension skills.

# TEACHING THE COMPREHENSION SKILLS

**I.E.Aaron and Byron Callaway**

Being able to recognize words rapidly and efficiently is an essential for understanding what is read, and, therefore, word recognition skills must be taught thoroughly. However, understanding in reading involves far more than recognition of words. Many skills, or clusters of skills, are involved in reading comprehension.

This article discusses separately each of twenty comprehension skills. As each is discussed, general statements will be followed by specific activities teachers may use for developing the skills. Where appropriate, examples will be given both in developmental and in content-area reading. The first eight skills may be thought of as those involved in many different types of material. The remaining twelve abilities are those related to reading for specific purposes. A good reader is competent in *all* of these areas.

The reader should keep in mind that these twenty skills overlap at various points and that several of them are very similar. Some of them actually involve several skills and may best be thought of as clusters of techniques and understandings. In the instructional setting, the teacher often works on the development of several different comprehension abilities at the same time because they "fit together."

(1) *Associating meaning with words.* Comprehension is influenced greatly by knowledge of word meanings. A reader gets *from* the printed page in terms of what he takes *to* that page. Thus, the child who knows many word meanings when he sees them is in an excellent position to comprehend what he reads.

When six-year-old children enter school, they know the meanings of thousands of words. Their teachers must constantly seek ways of enlarging even more this knowledge of words. Most teachers in the first grade center basal reading instruction around texts having controlled vocabularies. This control of the vocabulary permits the teacher to introduce gradually and sequentially the words in the text and the beginning reading skills. Words used in these books are those already known by the children. Little or no additional development of vocabulary occurs unless the teacher takes other steps, such as in sharing periods, to continue the development of meaning vocabulary.

Possible ways to enlarge the meaning vocabularies of children include the following:

a. Discuss meanings of words met in reading, sometimes in advance, sometimes after reading.

b Encourage children to discuss experiences through planned discussion periods.

c. Use visual aids to enlarge word meanings.

d. Encourage children to keep a record of new words learned. (This may be done in a notebook or in a card file, one new word on each card.)

e. Build background of experience through trips, discussions, and reading.

f. Teach children to use the dictionary efficiently and effectively.

g. Teach meanings of word elements (roots, prefixes, and suffixes.)

h. Before making an assignment involving new words in a content area, place some of the most difficult words on the chalkboard and discuss their meanings.

i. Discuss new words in class after, as well as before, a content-area selection has been read.

j. Select words with special meanings, such as *mouth* of a river and North *pole* in geography, and have children contrast the general meaning with the special meaning it has in geography.

k. Prepare short tests to check on whether the new vocabulary in a content area has been mastered. Re-teach it if it has not been mastered.

l. Encourage students to keep a list or notebook on important new words that are causing difficulty.

m. In assignments containing many new words, have the students write down the new words they see. Suggest they get the meanings by use of context and dictionary. Follow this with a discussion about the meanings of new words.

n. Write sentences containing words with difficult meanings and have students read them. Write them so meaning can be pinpointed from context.

o. At junior high and high school level, prepare vocabulary exercises from words selected from newspapers. Present the words in context and ask the students to define them as they are used in the sentences.

p. Present words that are spelled alike but with different pronunciations in sentences and ask the children to define each word as it is used in the sentence.

q. Use the same word in several different sentences with each sentence using a different meaning of the word. Ask the children to define the word as it is used in each sentence.

(2) *Interpreting punctuation.* Skilled readers frequently overlook the essential role played by punctuation in reading because they use these marks automatically. However, punctuation marks give specific meaning to or clarify the written word. The size of a unit the child can read is determined by his maturity and his reading skill. Punctuation breaks the reading matter into units for him.

These markings are sometimes referred to as the traffic signals of reading. They tell the reader when to slow down, when to hesitate, when to stop; in fact, they are the controls if the reader is to obtain complete and accurate meaning. A first grade child was told by his father that he missed a period when he was reading. "What's a period?" When the father pointed one out to him, he said, "Daddy, that's a 'wait a minute'." This child's teacher had been developing understanding of the function of punctuation marks. Capital letters should also be observed, since they often indicate the beginning of a new thought unit.

The teacher may help to develop this skill by using the following:

a. Read material, ignoring punctuation; then reread the material, using punctuation.
b. Write sentences where the punctuation is changed, and call attention to how this changes the meaning. (Examples: "The man, said the policeman, was guilty. The man said the policeman was guilty." "He's going. He's going?")
c Call attention to how markings emphasize particular parts of written materials.
d. When meaning is not clear, discuss with the class how punctuation aids clearer understanding.
e. Develop exercises where students change the meaning by changing the punctuation.

(3) *Interpreting subheadings and other devices.* Subheadings, sideheadings, and similar devices are important in aiding in the understanding and in obtaining a preview of materials to be read. They are essential for more effective and more meaningful comprehension.

Many readers think of these devices simply as parts that can be ignored, when basically they tell the reader what to look for in the material he is reading. Purposeful reading aids comprehension. The headings establish the purpose for that particular unit. Headings are also an aid in locating materials more rapidly. The student needs only to scan the material to determine if it meets his particular needs.

Some teaching aids for interpreting subheadings and other devices are:

a. Call attention to headings. Read the heading, discuss with the class what it says; then have children read the material, calling attention to how the heading aided in understanding.
b. Develop materials in which headings are the main ideas.
c. With the school newspaper and other regular newspapers, use headlines to illustrate headings.
d. Take small sections of text or other materials and have children write the headings for the various parts.

(4) *Reading by thought units.* A good reader grasps thought units as he reads. If he reads word-by-word, comprehension is adversely affected. As the child's instant recognition of words grows, he is able to make the transition to the reading of meaningful units rather than individual words. A word-by-word reader loses the sense of the composition by the time he works his way laboriously toward the end of a long sentence.

Contrary to what some believe, the habit of pausing at approximately the same place on each line – as three fixations per line – is a bad habit. The good reader grasps thought units as his eyes pause on the copy.

Some ways children may be led toward the development of reading by thought units are:

a. Prepare material to be read orally, giving attention in advance to how it should be phrased. Mark the copy with light pencil marks.
b. Prepare exercises of multiple-choice type with answers in phrases.
   The boy threw the ball
   ..... over the moon.
   ..... over the house.
   ..... over the mountain.
c. Ask the child to find a phrase in the story (on a particular page) that answers a specific question.
   Where was Mary? (in the car)
   When did it happen? (in the morning)
d. Use an occasional exercise in which sentences are typed with additional space between phrases.
   The little brown bear went down the trail
   ahead of the car.
   As she stood by, he called over his shoulder
   to Mrs. Jones

(5) *Interpreting and appreciating figurative language.* Children often meet figurative language. It is especially prevalent in the social studies and in literature. By using metaphor, simile, personification, or hyperbole, the

writer expresses himself with more feeling. Or perhaps he grossly understates a situation for effect. Though good writers often express themselves in a straightforward and simple manner, they sometimes employ figurative language to help them paint a better word picture.

"The country was cracking open with a split right down the middle." "He entered the room from all doors at once." "Another state knocked loudly on the door for entrance." "She was a hit and run striver." "It was a slinging, ringing, clinging crowd." "She came up the stairs at 90 miles an hour." "The weeping willow sighed audibly and bowed sadly in the wind." These are examples of figurative language encountered by children in their reading. They must recognize it for what it is. They must be able to interpret it as the writer intended and to appreciate why the writer used it.

Sometimes the literal interpretation is far different from the figurative meaning. Occasionally the reader encounters subtle, almost hidden, meanings in a selection. This often is found in poetry. The reader, if he is to enjoy such selections, must have the background to understand as well as a desire to find them.

Some examples of activities designed to improve the child's interpretation and appreciation of figurative language are:

a. When a figure of speech is met, take the time to discuss it with the children. Guide them into getting its meaning and into seeing why it was used.
b. Underline figures of speech used in news magazines and in newspapers and discuss their meanings.
c. With a poem such as Frost's "The Road Not Taken," discuss the possible double meaning. Lead the high school students into deciding what Frost actually mean
d. In stories involving much figurative language, write literal translations of the terms and have the students find the figurative language in the story. They may then compare them to see which expresses the idea better.
e. Use exercises such as the following:

Directions: Rewrite each sentence below in such a way that it is expressed in a better manner. Use figurative language where appropriate. The first one is done for you.

(1) She ran up the stairs as fast as she could.
She flew up the stairs.
(2) He was a reckless driver.
(3) The little boy came quietly into the waiting room of the dentist's office.

(4) The frightened child looked up at the "six feet two" principal.
(5) The cluster of men moved rapidly toward the door.

f. Prepare exercises involving figurative language. Have the children discuss orally or in writing what is meant by the underlined words.

The *cotton men* came to the meeting.
The sunset *glowed like a lamp.*
It was a *devil on wheels.*
*Job erosion* set in, and he was out of work.
It nearly *split the Congress apart.*

(6) *Establishing purposes for reading.* Intelligent questioning (establishing purposes) improves comprehension in both immediate and delayed recall to a greater extent than does reading and rereading without preparation. Not only in the regular reading class but also in an assignment in a subject-matter area, it is essential that purposes be established before the child reads.

The difference between a successful and a dull lesson that fails to accomplish what the teacher intended frequently lies with the preparation. Essential aspects of the lesson are the purposes that are established and how they are established.

The full meaning and implications of a lesson can be developed by adequate preparation for the assignment. This is true in any subject-matter area as well as in basal reading instruction.

The teacher should have several goals in preparing the child for an assignment. The new vocabulary should be introduced in a meaningful manner and generally in context. Broad concepts of understanding that are essential in obtaining the general and the specific meanings should be developed. The teacher should also create interest in this particular assignment.

Following the above goals and before the child reads, the teacher should establish the purposes for which the child is to read. That is, the child should know specifically the purposes so he will understand exactly what information he is to obtain from his reading.

Although this does take time, it is essential for good teaching. If the class has had purposes established and has read for them, then it is necessary for the teacher to evaluate and to correct any misunderstandings.

Some suggestions for teaching children to read in terms of their purposes are these:

a. In teaching a directed reading lesson, give careful thought to setting the purpose for the initial silent reading. This purpose should vary

from lesson to lesson. At the first grade level, the purpose to be established may be very simple, as "Let's read to see what happened." At higher grade levels, it may become complex, as "Read these pages to study how the writer expressed his ideas. You will note that he uses words that are unusual. Study these unfamiliar expressions as you get to them. We will discuss them later."

b. In content subjects, suggest ways for the students to read the material when assignments are made. In mathematics, the teacher may ask such questions as: "Read to find the steps necessary for solving quadradic equations." In social studies, the purpose may be: "Read to find the events leading up to the declaration of war." In science, the teacher may state: "Read the directions for completing the experiment, and be sure to note the sequence of steps."

c. Discuss with the children the various purposes for reading a selection.

d. At the junior high and high school levels, prepare exercises such as these:

> A general science assignment has been made to read the material in a particular chapter to prepare for a test the next day. What is your purpose for reading this chapter? (Answer: To get the main ideas and details.)
>
> The English teacher assigned a humorous short story for reading. She stated that each person would be asked to express his opinion on it in class the next day. What is the purpose for reading? (Answer: To enjoy it.)

(7) *Knowing how to read in terms of purpose and difficulty level of materials.* Teachers must guide elementary and high school students in using appropriate techniques and speeds of reading. The techniques employed and how rapidly materials are read should depend upon why the materials are being read and how hard they are for the one doing the reading.

Reading a factual discussion about Robert Frost is quite different from reading one of his poems. Comprehending some of the complex sentences of Faulkner differs considerably from understanding some of Steinbeck's clear and simple sentences. A chapter in a chemistry text demands one kind of reading; reading a short story for enjoyment involves still another approach.

Not only does the reader need to know *how* to read for various purposes, but he also needs to know *when* to read for these purposes. Some poor readers in high school and college get little from reading because they

use a limited number of techniques in their reading. Perhaps the child has habituated a very slow, methodical approach for everything he reads, whether it be a chapter in a history text or an entertaining magazine article. He may be one who uses a "story approach" for all types of reading, including his geography text. The child must learn that as his purpose changes, his manner of reading changes. It is the teacher's responsibility for hhelping him to learn to read for various purposes and to help him to set up his purposes in advance of his reading. In the beginning, much of the burden for setting the purposes falls upon the teacher, but this burden gradually shifts to the child. He himself sets the purposes for his reading, and he selects the most appropriate techniques for reaching these purposes. He skims if he wishes to get a general impression or to find a fact for more careful reading. He reads slowly and pauses at natural points to think about what he has read if he is seeking details. He reads rapidly or slowly, depending upon the intensity of his interest and how much he wishes to "chew upon" the content if he is reading a short story or a novel for enjoyment. In reading a play, the reader sets the stage in his own mind. These are some of the varied purposes and ways of reading that elementary and high school students may employ as they read.

The speed at which material should be read sometimes is misunderstood. A common misconception is that a good reader has a very rapid rate of silent reading. If he is a good reader, he has as many rates of reading as he has purposes for reading and difficulty levels of materials. The same material may be read at entirely different speeds when the purpose of reading changes. One may skim the morning newspaper until he spots an item of particular interest. At that point, he slows down his speed and reads carefully. The adult taxpayer who reads an income tax blank at the same speed he does a novel is likely to encounter embarrassing difficulties at a later date.

Some suggestions for teaching children how to read in terms of purpose and difficulty level of materials are as follows:

a. Compare a written arithmetic problem with a paragraph of general material or with a poem.
b. Discuss with the class the difference in following detailed directions and in reading a sports page.
c. Develop an understanding of the many different purposes for which a person might read.
d. Use graded materials on different levels about the same topic or similar topics. Have students read these and call attention to how the difficulty of the material affects both rate and comprehension.

e. Read a paragraph to get the general import or to obtain a single fact. Then have the paragraph reread to find answers to specific and detailed questions.

(8) *Reading symbols.* Symbols of various kinds are utilized in several different types of materials children read. They are a vital part of map reading in geography and history and of mathematics. Children encounter proofreading symbols in English and diacritical markings in using the dictionary. The teacher who teaches the subject in which the symbols are used is the teacher who has the responsibility for seeing that the children master these symbols.

In geography, the reader encounters symbols used for degrees, cities, capitals, streams, railroads, and state lines. He must also learn to interpret latitude and longitude. The color scheme on some maps will give clues to elevations of land masses or depth of oceans. For intelligent reading of maps, the child needs to know how to use the map legend for any unfamiliar symbols that may be used.

As symbols are encountered in mathematics, they should be explained thoroughly to the pupils. The modern mathematics adds a number of symbols to those previously used in mathematics.

Some suggestions for teaching the reading of symbols are:

a. As each new symbol is met, discuss what it means.
b. In a subject such as arithmetic, take the symbols previously taught and prepare a test on them.
c. When a symbol that cannot be interpreted correctly without teacher guidance is to be met in reading, introduce the symbol before it is encountered in context. Take plenty of time to discuss it. Develop full meaning of the symbol.

(9) *Reading to find answers to specific questions.* Often the elementary or high school student is faced with the problem of reading to find answers to questions asked by teachers, other children, authors of texts and other classroom references, or themselves when the answers are given in the material to be read. This is an important purpose for reading, and skill in this type of comprehension certainly should be developed.

The teacher may ask: "How far is it from Chicago to Los Angeles?" "How many puppies did the Jones have?" "Where did Mae go when she left Uncle John?" "How many elements does the text state we have?" "How many states made up the Confederacy?" As the child reads or rereads the selection, he makes a mental note of the answer to the particular question or questions raised prior to his reading. Perhaps he uses a

study technique which involves his asking himself questions he wishes answered as he reads.

Sometimes reading to find answers to specific questions is thought to be a fairly low-level skill of comprehension. In some instances, this may be true, but this type of reading may prove to be quite complex, such as in the case of some of the more-difficult subject-matter text materials. Even though the reading matter may answer the questions directly, a great amount of background may be necessary for understanding the answer once it has been located.

Most classrooms give more practice of this type of reading and of reading for details than of many of the other types of reading. Basal reading guidebooks usually present more questions of this kind than of those that involve thinking beyond the facts. For this reason, the teacher must be careful to use other types of questions in addition to asking questions when the answers may be found directly stated in the reading matter.

When this skill is being developed, someone must ask the questions *in advance of the reading*. The child must have the questions in mind as he reads if he is to get practice in reading to find answers to specific questions when those answers are directly stated in the material to be read. The child himself should be taught to raise his own questions as a way of focusing his attention on important points as he reads. This is an excellent study technique. Occasionally the teacher should provide for the children to discuss what they should watch for as they read. Some text materials, too, have questions given at the beginning of a chapter to focus attention upon some of the most important points. All of these may help in the development of this skill.

Some suggestions for teaching this skill are:

a. As the developmental reading teacher establishes a purpose or purposes for reading, state several specific questions for the children to keep in mind as they read. Immediately after the silent reading is completed, discuss these questions, letting the children give the answers. They may also be asked to skim to find the specific answer and to read the answer aloud from the text.

b. In a content subject, such as in history, present several questions you want the children to answer after they have completed the reading of a chapter. These questions plus others should be asked after the chapter or chapter segment has been read. Including other questions will guard against the children reading *only* to find the answers to the specific questions asked.

c. In the purposeful rereading section of the directed reading lesson, have the children in a subgroup reread to answer specific questions, some of them involving details that can be answered directly from the materials being read. "As you reread, watch for the answers to these questions: . . ."

d. For children who need special help, prepare short paragraphs (or select them from published material) along with factual questions of this type. Ask the questions before the children read the paragraphs. Have them read to get the answers to the questions you have raised.

e. Give children a list of factual questions about a chapter in a text such as may be used in a geography class before they read the chapter. They may be asked to write out answers to the questions in their own words. As soon as this is done, the questions may be discussed in class, with children rereading to clear up conflicting answers. A second reading may be done to answer questions that involve getting implied meanings, evaluating critically, following sequences, and the like.

f. Teach children that more than one reading is necessary in content area material for a thorough understanding of the content of chapters in texts. Students may be given several fairly difficult factual questions (as in physics or history) in advance of their reading. Ask them to read the entire chapter carefully and then reread as much as they need to for a complete understanding of the questions. "What is the relationship of temperature to the density of the air?" "Describe how lightning occurs and what causes it." "How does a bill become a law of the United States?" "How is the President of the United States elected?" Discuss with the students the importance of recalling what they have read in between readings.

(10) *Reading for details.* An essential aspect of all types of reading is the apprehension of details. In study materials, to obtain the specific meaning the reader must obtain the important minor as well as the major ideas. Reading for details is related directly to many of the other comprehension and study skills. To enjoy fully some types of recreational reading, such as mystery stories, getting the details is essential.

Elementary and high school students are often inaccurate in this skill. This is especially true in reading difficult materials.

Difficulty in reading for details arises partially from several aspects. First it is a relatively slow, analytical process requiring close attention and concentration on the part of the reader. Frequent rereading is necessary to obtain the essential details and their interrelationships. Rereading may also

filled with directions to be followed. Following directions also is important in taking standardized tests and in responding to items in programed reading materials.

The teacher needs to help the children develop an attitude of precision of interpretation of directions. A sort of "don't care" attitude, or one of "just so I come near it," sometimes appears to have been developed by a few children. A teacher being satisfied with inexactness may lead to such an attitude. Children should learn the importance of understanding precisely what is to be done and that if directions are not clearly understood, they should reread them.

If children are to feel a responsibility for interpreting written directions accurately, teachers must insist that they read the directions for themselves. It is often easier on the teacher to correct a child verbally if he is following directions inaccurately, but such help will not develop independence in this type of reading. The slower process of asking the child to reread the directions to see if he is doing what they tell him to do is a much better approach. This places the burden where it should be – on the child.

Children who are poor readers may fail to follow directions because they cannot recognize key words. Not knowing the word "underline," a child may interpret it as "circle." In these cases, it is likely that the child is being given materials too difficult for him. Any instruction in following directions should be given in materials children *can* read.

Some suggestions for teaching children to follow directions are:

a. Give simple directions in the initial teaching of this skill. Example:
   Do what each sentence tells you to do.
   (1) Draw a line through the first word of this sentence.
   (2) Put an X on the picture of the tree.
   (3) Color the flower red.
   (4) Circle the last word of this sentence.
   (5) Put two marks under the third word of this sentence.
b. Write directions for routine classroom "housekeeping" duties on the chalkboard. Have each child read his particular assignment.
c. Occasionally prepare individual assignments for the children. Write out individual instructions and give to the children.
d. Where workbooks are used, insist that children read their own directions. When some child fails to follow directions accurately, suggest he reread his instructions. Then have him tell you what they state.
e. In high school, teach students to fill in income tax blanks in appropriate classes. Near the beginning of the calendar year is a good time for such an activity.

filled with directions to be followed. Following directions also is important in taking standardized tests and in responding to items in programed reading materials.

The teacher needs to help the children develop an attitude of precision of interpretation of directions. A sort of "don't care" attitude, or one of "just so I come near it," sometimes appears to have been developed by a few children. A teacher being satisfied with inexactness may lead to such an attitude. Children should learn the importance of understanding precisely what is to be done and that if directions are not clearly understood, they should reread them.

If children are to feel a responsibility for interpreting written directions accurately, teachers must insist that they read the directions for themselves. It is often easier on the teacher to correct a child verbally if he is following directions inaccurately, but such help will not develop independence in this type of reading. The slower process of asking the child to reread the directions to see if he is doing what they tell him to do is a much better approach. This places the burden where it should be – on the child.

Children who are poor readers may fail to follow directions because they cannot recognize key words. Not knowing the word "underline," a child may interpret it as "circle." In these cases, it is likely that the child is being given materials too difficult for him. Any instruction in following directions should be given in materials children *can* read.

Some suggestions for teaching children to follow directions are:

a. Give simple directions in the initial teaching of this skill. Example:
   Do what each sentence tells you to do.
   (1) Draw a line through the first word of this sentence.
   (2) Put an X on the picture of the tree.
   (3) Color the flower red.
   (4) Circle the last word of this sentence.
   (5) Put two marks under the third word of this sentence.
b. Write directions for routine classroom "housekeeping" duties on the chalkboard. Have each child read his particular assignment.
c. Occasionally prepare individual assignments for the children. Write out individual instructions and give to the children.
d. Where workbooks are used, insist that children read their own directions. When some child fails to follow directions accurately, suggest he reread his instructions. Then have him tell you what they state.
e. In high school, teach students to fill in income tax blanks in appropriate classes. Near the beginning of the calendar year is a good time for such an activity.

f. Give the boys directions for making kites and the girls directions for making puppets. Discuss these with them. Look at the products of those who make the objects.

(12) *Reading to understand the writer's plan of attack.* The superior reader understands the writer's plan of attack if he comprehends the material as he should. To understand fully the author's meaning, the reader must determine if the material is presented as fact, as opinion, with a "tongue in cheek" approach, as satire, or for recreational reading. Readers frequently interpret literally what the author has written as sarcasm. Understanding figures of speech may be essential to adequate comprehension.

Another approach to the plan of attack is how the author develops his material. One author may state his main points first and then develop the supporting evidence, while the second begins with details and supporting evidence, reaching his conclusions and main ideas at the end of the material. The method he uses in organizing material, developing understandings, and how he illustrates and explains will aid in comprehension.

Writers differ in the use of footnotes, how they cite supporting evidence, and the way they develop illustrations and use graphs. The writer will generally have consistency in his approach. Understanding these aspects aids comprehension and contributes to ease of reading.

Illustrations for teaching students to understand the writer's plan of attack are the following:

a. Ask students to determine whether the material is factual or satire. Follow by discussion.
b. Have students outline materials following the author's organization.
c. Study different chapters of the same book to determine if the plan of attack is consistent.
d. Compare writings of different authors and different types of material to note difference in plan of attack.

(13) *Reading to follow a sequence of events.* Being able to follow a sequence of happenings is an important ability in understanding historical material. It is also necessary for comprehending fully much of fiction. In addition to being able to recall the order of happenings, the reader must have an accurate concept of distance in time between the events and relationships among them. Because the concepts of time and of cause and effect relations are also involved, this ability may be thought of as a cluster of skills rather than a single one.

Time tends to run together for young children, and they have little idea of the relationship of events, such as yesterday coming before today. Ask a

six-year-old in the afternoon to tell you what he has done since getting up in the morning. He is likely to mix the happenings with little attention to the order in which they occurred. Both maturation and experience are necessary for this understanding to develop.

Children who hear parents tell or read stories and who have retold the stories have a head start on the development of this ability. First grade teachers who have children retell "as it happened" a story such as "Goldilocks and the Three Bears," are working on this skill.

The time line is a good aid for helping children to understand the relationship between events in terms of the times of their occurrence. This is the foundation of understanding cause and effect relationships. Seeing dates charted on a time line orders these events in terms of other related events. History teachers often start a time line chart at the beginning of the course and add important events to the chart as they are studied. The students, by the end of the course, have charted in time all important historical happenings and are able to see some cause and effect relations from the chart.

To know *who* did *what*, and *when* and *where* it occurred is important, but for establishing cause and effect relations, *how* and *why* are also necessary. Teachers' questions will often determine if children see the relations between events. *How* and *why* questions must be asked if children are to note as they read the causal relations between events.

Some teaching suggestions for this skill are:

a. Have pupils retell a story as it was written.
b. Present several events in a story or an actual happening in scrambled order, and ask the pupils to place them in the correct order.
c. Use a time line to chart events in history or in a story. One may be started at the beginning of a course in history and continued to the end of the course. Only important events would be charted.
d. Raise questions about how and why events in history or fiction were brought about.
e. In the upper elementary grades and above, analyze current happenings in terms of their antecedents. Examples: "What events led up to the increase in the price of steel?" "What important events occurred just prior to the President's address to the Nation?"
f. Help pupils to make the transition from "once upon a time" to a more accurate statement of when past events occurred by relating the event's occurrence to the lifetime of the children. Example: "Most of you are ten years of age. This battle occurred 100 years ago. That is ten times as long as each one of you has lived."

g. Present a list of possible causes, with some incorrect possibilities, of a happening in a story or in real life. Ask pupils to eliminate those which could not have been causes.

(14) *Reading to get main idea.* Reading to get the main idea is an important skill in both recreational and study materials. It may be necessary for the reader to grasp the main idea of a paragraph, a page, an article, or a chapter. This ability is necessary for comprehending factual material. It is also used in the reading of the more abstract types of writing, and the main idea here may be a feeling or emotion expressed by the writer.

This is a rather difficult skill as it involves discrimination and judgment on the part of the reader. He must get the essential implication of the whole with little attempt to remember details. In study materials this is finding the important parts that are required for understanding. This approach leads to maximum enjoyment and relaxation in recreational reading.

To aid instruction in this area the teacher can use introductions, conclusions, topical sentences, headings, and summary sentences. Newspapers are helpful in using headlines as main ideas.

Stories can be used where students write the headlines. Summarizing paragraphs and short articles in one sentence will help with understanding. This type of exercise should always be followed by discussion so that the student understands if his summary is or is not the main idea.

Exercises to help develop this skill include the following:

a. Give the main points of the story.
b. Ask what the expected outcome of this process was.
c. Use newspaper stories with headlines removed and ask students to write headlines.
d. Have new titles written for stories by the student with explanation of how they fit the story.
e. Have titles and subheadings written for paragraphs and articles.
f. List several possible titles and let students select the one that best fits the story, article, or paragraph.

(15) *Reading to locate information.* Reading to locate information may be considered also as a cluster of skills and understandings. Sometimes the reader is searching for information on a single topic or perhaps the answer to a concise question. He may skim to locate the pertinent section and then read it carefully. Or perhaps he concludes that the selection does not contain what he seeks. Again, he may use an index or table of contents to locate a selection for further reading. At still another time he may go to

reference books for the location of information. He must know that the reference books exist and also how to use them. This involves finding what he wants and discarding irrelevant data. In summary, reading to locate information includes (1) skimming to locate a fact or a section for further reading, (2) knowledge of the existence of selected reference books, and (3) skill in using locational aids (such as table of contents, indexes, map listings, alphabetizing, and the card catalog). These skills are extremely important in study-type of reading.

Planned instruction is needed for teaching the skills and understandings involved in locating information, and situations involving use of the skills must be set up to insure mastery. After the initial teaching of a skill, such as using the table of contents, most of the practice in using that skill should come along with actual experience in using the aid in obtaining needed information.

Whenever possible, sets of encyclopedias and other widely used reference books should be readily available to the children in the classroom. Those used less frequently may be housed in the central library. A copy of *The World Almanac* is useful in upper elementary, junior high, and high school classrooms. In all classrooms above the primary grades, an adequate number of dictionaries should be available at all times.

Several publishers have recently prepared materials aimed toward helping teachers to teach the use of reference aids. Among these are Educational Development Laboratories and Science Research Associates.

Some teaching suggestions for reading to locate information are:

a. Check to make certain children know the alphabet before trying to teach them to use a reference in which knowledge of the alphabet is required, as in use of encyclopedias.
b. To get practice in skimming to find a particular bit of information, place a pencil in the center of the page as a guide – if it is needed. Make one quick fixation on either side of the pencil, keeping in mind the fact for which you are looking. Eventually what you are seeking will "hop out at you." The pencil should not be used unless it is necessary as a reminder to look rapidly twice per line; remove it as soon as it is not needed. You are not reading every word; you are merely searching to see if the line contains information you seek. If you are looking for a date, you would slow down only if you saw a date inserted in the materials.
c. Use exercises of this type to teach use of book titles in locating information.

You are looking for information on Mexican agriculture. Which books are likely possibilities? Check these.

..... *Our Neighbors to the North*
..... *Our Neighbors to the South*
..... *Fighting Bulls in Mexico*
..... *North and South American Farming Practices*

d. At intervals, set up situations that will cause pupils to use the table of contents and the index in texts they use. "We studied about the formation of mountains several months ago. Let's use the index to find the section in the text on this. When you find it, read it again. We'll need this as a basis for our discussion."
e. Use exercises such as this in teaching use of index:

You are looking for information on transportation in America during the late 1700's and early 1800's. What are possible headings you may find related to this in your text? (Study the index before preparing such exercises.)

f. Familiarize children in intermediate grades and upward with the particular encyclopedias in the school. If a set has a special index and a yearbook, let the pupils know and require them to use these.

(16) *Reading to enjoy and to appreciate.* Enjoyment and appreciation of the written word depends upon more than comprehension. Emotions and attitudes play an important part. However, an essential element of enjoyment and appreciation is the ability to read the material and to comprehend what it says.

To become a good reader the child must read more than the assignments that are required in school. This is one reason why recreational reading should be an important part of the school program at all levels. Generally, the person who enjoys reading and can appreciate the humor, the finer shades of meanings, the way a plot is developed, or the reasoning of the author will do free reading. This does not preclude enjoyment and appreciation of textbooks.

Appreciation and enjoyment may be developed by the following:

a. Have children bring favorite poetry and read it to the class.
b. Dramatize enjoyable stories.
c. Read to the class many types of materials about various subjects. Perhaps much more time should be spent in reading to children at all levels of the public schools than is now being spent.
d. Read to the class and discuss with them parts that illustrate character, that give shades of meaning, that are subtle humor, that illus-

trate figures of speech, and other types that furnish enjoyment and appreciation of the rich heritage of written materials.

(17) *Reading to interpret illustrative material such as maps, globes, graphs, tables, and pictures.* Maps, globes, graphs, tables, charts, and pictures are vital parts of printed matter in most subject areas, and children must learn to read them effectively. The child first encounters illustrative material in school in the form of pictures in readiness books. He meets increasingly complex illustrations as he moves upward through the grades. He must become an effective reader of all types of illustrative material.

Children are associated with maps and globes from the primary grades upward. They need to know what these aids are, how they are made, and how to read them accurately and rapidly. Some of the understandings necessary for effective use of maps and globes are knowledge of the special terms (such as latitude, longitude, and equator), knowing the purpose of the grid system, understanding why we have a North and a South pole, recognizing distortions caused by portraying the earth's surface on a flat map, knowing how to read the map legend, understanding the symbols used, and knowing the meaning of the various colors used on a map.

When a table, graph, or chart is first included in text material, the teacher must teach the children how to read it. He must also help the pupils to develop the habit of taking the time necessary to study these aids. They are vital parts of the reading matter and must be read.

Pictures are often included with the text to enlarge upon or explain the printed matter. The student who does not "read" them misses a part of the story or article. Some recent junior high and high school reading texts include exercises on interpreting pictures.

An incidental approach to the teaching of the reading and interpretation of illustrative material will not get the job done; instruction must be planned. Lessons should be scheduled for teaching the various skills and understandings involved in each type of illustrative matter. Follow-up practice is also necessary for permanent learning.

Some teaching suggestions for reading illustrative material are:

a. Show children a picture for a short time. Remove it and then have them describe orally or in writing what they saw. Interpretative questions may also be asked: "What do you think has happened just before the scene you see?" "Where do you think they are going?" "What do you think they will do next?" "Why does the girl have the puppy in her hat?"
b. When a graph or similar illustration is met, lead the children into

seeing how it tells more than or makes clearer the printed text.

c. To help children understand tables, have them make a table of some characteristic about themselves. For instance, they may make a table of their heights and/or weights.
d. In teaching map reading, start with maps that carry very little in the way of detail. Gradually move toward detail.
e. Obtain inexpensive or free maps that children can "get their hands on" to build familiarity with maps.
f. Have class members write to the various state chambers of commerce for information about the states. Pupils may look at a U.S. map to guess the routes their letters will travel to their destinations. They may also note the states each letter will cross.
g. Encourage pupils who make out-of-state trips during holidays to give a brief report of the trip and to show on a map where they went.
h. Discuss the purpose of the imaginary grid system used on the map and globe. Explain that it helps us to locate places on the map or on the globe. Explain how longitude and latitude fit into the picture.
i. As a beginning in map reading, have the pupils draw a "map" of the classroom or of the school ground. This gets over the idea that a map is a "blueprint" of something that actually exists. Next, to teach the scale, a "map" of the classroom may be drawn to scale.
j. Encourage parents who are planning summer trips to let the children serve as "navigators." Planning a cross-country trip is an excellent way to learn to read road maps.
k. To show a contrast between the map and the globe, have the children compare two places near the North pole (such as Nome and Whitehorse). Follow this by cutting into segments an inexpensive rubber ball. Show what happens when the end of a segment is stretched.
l. Teach the legend of a map and have the children apply what they have been taught. Plan for periodic practice of this skill.

(18) *Reading to get depth for detailed remembering.* Purposeful reading, as indicated earlier, is much more effective than reading when purposes have not been established. To aid the retention of knowledge, individuals work out their own or use techniques that have been developed by others.

A technique that aids study and retention has been developed. Known in various forms, it is frequently referred to as either the SQ3R (developed by Francis Robinson, of Ohio State University) or the PQRST (used by the U.S. Armed Forces) method. These methods are basically the same.

| | |
|---|---|
| Survey | Preview |
| Question | Question |
| Read | Read |
| Recite | Survey |
| Review | Test |

The SQ3R appears to be the most widely used and will be discussed here.

*Survey* means to get a preview or understanding of what is to be read. It makes use of several of the comprehension skills already discussed. In reading a book, the student reads the preface, examines the table of contents, thumbs through the book and reads brief passages, and reads chapter introductions and summaries.

In surveying a chapter, the student reads the title, the introduction, the headings, subheadings or sideheadings, and the chapter summary. A person may skim parts of the chapter to get a more detailed picture. In this manner the reader obtains an overview of the content of the material to be read, and by anticipating what to expect, his comprehension can be improved. With short selections, the introductory paragraph, the summary paragraph, and topic sentences are read to obtain an overview of the material.

Along with and following the surveying comes the *Question* step. During the *Survey* the student thinks about the material and anticipates what he expects to obtain from it. To do this efficiently, he may ask himself questions. "What do I want to obtain from this material? How will the second part be related to the first part? What are going to be the important aspects? The details?" From the survey he should be able to organize his thinking so that he will be reading for certain types of information, thus more intelligently guiding his own reading. Reading the questions at the end of a chapter or section is also good practice in making the reading more purposeful.

Following the *Question* part, the student will *Read* the material. This reading should be an active process and adjusted to the purposes for which he is reading. When he finds an answer to a question, he may need to slow down his reading or to reread the part that is of most importance. The author may call attention to certain parts needing stress by use of italics, using boldface type, or some other typographical aid. These should be signs calling the reader's attention to the importance of this part.

*Recite* will follow the reading of the material, or it may come at times when the reader has read part of the material or has found parts that appear to be of special significance. The reader will recall his questions, the questions of the author, or think of new questions that have occurred

during the reading. He then should state to himself, in his own words, the answers to these questions. This process is much more productive for both comprehension and for recall than simply having a vague impression and thinking, "Oh yes, this part is the answer." Time spent in "reciting" improves both immediate and delayed recall.

*Review* will occur after the preceding four steps. Here the reader can go further than the *Recite* step. Mentally he may go over the entire material, organizing it and relating the various parts. This may also include doing the steps that were included in the *Survey* to give him a more thorough understanding. Again he may want to take his or the author's questions to see if he has specific understandings. It may also involve rereading to clear up vague ideas. *Review*, of course, would be done before tests or reporting sessions.

This type of study pattern is a very effective way to improve comprehension and to aid remembering.

Some suggestions for teaching children to read in depth for detailed remembering are these:

a. In junior high and high school classes, take time to teach a technique such as the SQ3R approach. Go through the process as the children follow in materials each student has in his hands. Give two or three similar sessions at later times, spaced at least several days apart to make certain the students have learned this approach.
b. Encourage children to outline difficult materials and to review their outlines periodically
c. Give practice in selecting main ideas and details in materials they have read.
d. Take advantage of every opportunity to remind students that difficult material must be read, thought about, and read again – perhaps several times – for detailed remembering.
e. Have children summarize short selections with sentences and longer selections with paragraphs to help improve comprehension.

(19) *Reading to draw conclusions, to generalize, to get implied meanings.* Understanding the meaning of directly stated facts is only a part of being able to read effectively. The reader must be able to think with those facts as he reads them. He must be able to draw conclusions from them, to generalize from what he has read to other situations not mentioned in the reading matter, and to "read between the lines" as he also gets the literal meanings of a selection. Sometimes the most significant meaning goes beyond what is directly stated, and at times, what the writer actually is

saying goes far beyond the literal translation of the words he has used. From the very earliest instruction in reading, children must be taught to "think with" the facts encountered in reading. Drawing conclusions, generalizing, and getting implied meanings are important both in developmental and in content-area reading.

The questions teachers ask set the stage for the types of reading the children do. Some questions teachers may ask to lead the children into thinking as they read are these: "Why do you think Uncle Jack wanted Bill to visit him during the harvest season?" "What do you think happened just before our story started?" Write a new ending for this story." "If you had been one of Washington's soldiers at Valley Forge, how do you suppose you would have felt toward Washington?" "Which president do you think was our greatest? Why?" "Compare Macbeth and Hitler." "In Robert Frost's 'The Witch of Coos,' what mood is Frost attempting to create? Is he serious, or is he writing with 'tongue in cheek'?" "Why do you suppose scientists thought the atom could not be split?"

Children who have been answering factual questions only often appear lost when confronted with questions demanding that they think beyond that which is stated in the text or other printed matter. A gradual process must be followed in leading them toward proficiency in these skills. Children who have been asked questions involving thought from first grade upward are likely to think along with their reading. Reading must be accompanied by a great deal of thought at all grade levels.

Some teaching suggestions for getting implied meanings are:

a. Prepare a description of some process or activity with which the child is familiar. Stop the description before the end and ask the child to supply the next step.
b. Tell the child before he reads that the story does not tell him who performed some act, what kind of person a character is, where the story happened, when the action took place, or something of this nature. Then have the child read to "fill in the gap" on this information. This forces him to think as he reads.
c. Ask the child to describe some object mentioned in the story as he thinks it would look.
d. Select cartoons from the editorial pages of recent newspapers and ask the children to interpret them. They will see that a great deal of background information is necessary for an accurate interpretation.
e. Select a story or stories from newspapers in which the reader must "read between the lines" to get the full significance of certain parts of the story. Discuss the implied meanings.

f. Discuss some current news story in which students are interested. Discuss what is likely to happen next and why.

g. Ask questions that will lead the student to draw conclusions, to "read between the lines." These questions should lead the student into thinking with the facts. Examples: "If you had been one of General Lee's soldiers at the surrender, how do you suppose you would have felt toward Lee?" "Describe Sam McGee as you think he looked and acted. How much of your description is in the poem, and how much is in your imagination?" "The story doesn't tell us, but why do you think John refused to look toward the old house?"

h. Select a few paragraphs from a short story and read them aloud to the class. Ask them to predict what will happen next. Discuss why they think as they do. Suggest they read the remainder of the story to check on the accuracy of their predictions.

i. Write a short paragraph involving action or feeling but do not complete the "story." Let the pupils supply the ending.

j. Have the students write a new ending to a story.

k. Have the students read the description of a character in a story. Ask them to describe the character more fully, adding other traits they think he possessed. Ask why they think as they do.

l. Suggest the students read biographical material on historical characters. Lead them into seeing that history is influenced by living people. Ask what kind of person they think a particular historical character was when their age.

m. In history or in a story with a period setting, take time to discuss the way people lived at the time so interpretations and understandings will be in terms of life as it was at the time of the story, not in present terms.

n. Raise questions that will lead students to put themselves "into the shoes" of someone quite different from themselves about whom they have read. Lead them into seeing that in many ways they and the "different" person are very much alike.

(20) *Reading to evaluate critically.* In a democracy, it is essential that there is critical evaluation in both listening and reading. Critical reading is one of the higher comprehension skills. Even highly intelligent children may be poor in this skill.

Critical evaluation at higher levels requires a skilled reader. In addition, judgment is necessary in selecting the appropriate data for generalizing and for reaching conclusions. The many different views that are expressed, the propaganda that all readers meet, and wise consumer education make it imperative that instruction be given in this skill.

In the United States, the concept of freedom of the press and freedom of speech has apparently developed for many the belief that any material in print is true. This seems to be especially true of ideas concerning newspapers and news magazines. The goal of the teacher should be to get the reader to evaluate the material. To do this he must have skill and must think for himself. It is *not* indoctrination.

Use of the other comprehension skills and of the study skills contribute to evaluation of written material. "Who wrote the material, and what is his background in this area? When was it written? Is it stated as fact or opinion? Does the author cite supporting evidence? Are special interests involved? Is bias indicated? Are the statements specifics or generalities?" The use of this type of question and others will assist the reader in determining whether the material is significant.

Teaching recognition of propaganda devices will also aid in critical evaluation but will not do the complete job. The reader can detect these devices and still be influenced by them. He may recognize an article as propaganda, but because of his bias, still be influenced by the material. If the reader has limited knowledge of the subject, the propaganda may be so subtle that he does not recognize it. Developing a critical attitude so that the reader evaluates and compares materials will be helpful.

Some ways that this can be done are the following:

a. Have the child read a story, and then ask if he believes this is true.
b. Have him read statements by a writer; then have him indicate whether this is stated as an opinion or a fact.
c. Determine whether the writer has a background to enable him to make judgments in the area about which he is writing.
d. Use advertisements, especially those of the testimonial and band wagon types, and have the class analyze and discuss them. Let them bring advertisements to class to illustrate need for evaluation.
e. Bring statements indicating opposite viewpoints and have them compared.
f. Take statements on controversial issues and have the class rewrite them using only the factual materials in the statement.
g. Determine whether the writer indicates that this is opinion or fact.
h. Compare earlier writings with those of today that are about the same subject. Call attention to copyright dates
i. Encourage discussion around discrepancies students may note in the same book or in a comparison of two sources.

# TEACHING COMPREHENSION SKILLS IN BASAL READING

Hazel D. Simpson

When basal readers are used for instruction, the teacher emphasizes meaningful reading from the beginning. The teacher provides motivating questions before the children read silently, even at first grade level. All of the comprehension skills can be developed in part through reading lessons without recourse to definite practice exercises separated from the story content. The skills that the teacher decides to develop in any particular lesson will depend upon the total reading program, and this is based upon the needs of the pupils. Many excellent suggestions for the development of comprehension abilities are found in teacher's guidebooks accompanying basal reading texts.

The teacher needs to know the various comprehension skills and the interrelationships of these skills in order to plan an effective developmental program in reading. He is obligated to prepare the reader for comprehension. Certain principles should be observed in guiding the program of building comprehension.

Two lesson plans, one at third grade and the other at ninth grade level, will be presented. A six-phase pattern will be used here. These six phases are as follows:

A. Building readiness for the story
B. Directed silent reading
C. Comprehension check and skill building
D. Word recognition skill building
E. Rereading with another purpose
F. Follow-up activities

As will be noted, the phases are not necessarily in the exact order presented here except for the first two steps. Each step, or phase, will be lettered as it is above in order to make it easier for the reader to follow.

*A Lesson Plan for "Jam for Jim," Third Grade Reading Level*

This lesson plan is based on "Jam for Jim," in Houghton Mifflin's *Climbing Higher*, second semester, third grade reading level. This pattern may be used for teaching a story or article on any grade level, but what would be done in each step would vary considerably in terms of the story or article, the background of the students, and the major purposes of the story or article. If the teacher has several groups in reading, she would use this particular plan with those reading in the second semester, third grade reading text.

A. *Building readiness for the story.*

(This step attempts to do four things: Build an interest in the story, give oral control of the vocabulary that may cause difficulty, build whatever concept background is needed for an understanding of the story, and set a purpose or purposes for reading.)

(Give out the books. Have the pupils find the table of contents.) "Find the title, 'Jam for Jim.' What is the page number? Turn to page 5. Look at the picture. What do you think the boy is doing? Is he a good shot? How do you know? Can you throw well? Tell us some of the things you can hit. The boy's name is Clem." (Print the word *Clem* on the chalkboard.) "We are going to read about Clem and some of the things which happen to him. Close your books and let's look at some of the words which might cause some trouble."

Introducing new words: (The story contains sixteen new words, but the pupils should be able to identify independently all of these except *raspberries, practice,* and *cottage.* Print the sentence on the board: *I like to eat raspberries with sugar and cream.* Point to *raspberries.*) "You may know this word. Use the meaning of the other words in the sentence and what you know about the sounds that letters or groups of letters stand for to help you decide what the word is. The letter *p* is silent in this word. Be sure the word makes sense. Who can tell us that word? Now let's say it together. Someone read the whole sentence for us." (Introduce the other two words in a similar manner, making certain they are presented in sentences.)

Setting up reading purposes: "Have you ever been berry picking? In our story Sally goes berry picking, and Clem plays a trick on her. Let's read to find out how he frightens Sally and if you think this is a good trick."

B. *Directed silent reading.*

"Read pages 5,6, and 7, and find out two things: How did Clem happen to have stones in his pocket? And how did he frighten Sally? I shall be glad to help you with any word you do not know or cannot figure out for yourself."

(The teacher stands by to help as the children read silently. She gives help on the spot when it is needed. If the child has the skill background for unlocking the word for himself, the teacher gives a quick clue and permits the child to help himself. If it would take too long and destroys the train of thought, the teacher would tell the child the word.)

C. *Comprehension check and skill building.*

"How did Clem happen to have stones in his pocket? How did he frighten Sally? If you were in the woods and heard a loud noise, what would you think had happened? What would have happened if Clem had missed the target and had hit Sally? How are raspberries and blackberries alike? How are they different?"

E. *Rereading with another purpose.*

"Find the lines on page 5 that tell when Clem first learned to throw." (Have someone read it orally.) "Now find the lines on page 6 that tell how Clem got ready to frighten Sally." (Ask someone to read it orally. The teacher may want someone to read the whole page.) "Find the question Sally asked Clem on page 7. Read just the question. Now will you read all of page 7?"

(If the pupil does not recognize a word while reading orally, tell him what that word is. Make a note that the pupil needs additional work with the word. The pupil may be distracted if he has to figure out the word for himself. The major purpose of oral reading should be voice intonations, emphases and pauses which are necessary to interpret the story. The other children should listen but not necessarily keep the place.)

B. *Directed silent reading.*

"Now read pages 8 and 9. Find out what Clem said he would do if he saw a bear and why Sally was picking raspberries." (Again the teacher stands by to give help as the last two pages of the story are read silently.)

C. *Comprehension check and skill building.*

"Well, what did Clem say he would do if he saw a bear? Why was Sally picking raspberries? Was Sally really afraid? Why? Where did Clem suggest they go to pick raspberries? Who was Jim? How many raspberries had Sally picked? Why didn't she have more?"

E. *Rereading for another purpose.*

"Find and read the lines on page 8 that tell why Clem was practicing throwing stones." (Ask one child to read the whole page.) "Find and read the lines on page 9 that tell what Jim wanted the first thing when he got home from the army."

C. *Comprehension check and skill building.*

(The teacher leads a discussion of the entire story to make sure that the main facts are understood, but, more important, she works toward having the children think about what they have read. She leads them into evalu-

ating decisions and actions and into thinking beyond the story, into getting implied meanings. The teacher would need a list of questions to help her to see that all important points are covered if they do not come out in the discussion. Some possible questions are listed below.)

(1) What was the most important idea in the story?
(2) Would you use just a stone to frighten away a bear? Why? Why not?
(3) What was different about this story that made the story unusual?
(4) What was the trick Clem played on Sally?

(The teacher may use exercises such as the following ones.)

*Vocabulary – Choosing the Right Word:*

(1) Berry ..... often grow on land from which the trees have been cut.
bunches bounces bushes
(2) It is easy to trip over tree ..... when looking for berries in such places.
stumps stoves stops
(3) Some animals that usually are ..... of people will come close to towns looking for berries.
scared scratch scold
(4) Bears don't often ..... people.
bother borrow brother

*Recalling Details:* If the statement is true, write the word *true;* if it is false, write the word *false.*

..... (1) Clem could throw a snowball well.
..... (2) Clem did not like to throw at a can on top of a post.
..... (3) Clem was walking through the woods late one afternoon.
..... (4) Sally knew that Clem was in the woods.
..... (5) Clem missed when he tried to hit the pail.
..... (6) Sally dropped her pail.
..... (7) Sally said Clem would be afraid to throw a stone at a bear.

E. *Rereading with another purpose.*

"Today's story is a good story to read aloud because it has so much conversation in it. What do we mean by conversation?" (Encourage sufficient discussion to enable the children to understand the meaning of the word.)

(Choose certain children to portray the characters of Clem and Sally.

Another child may be the narrator to read the parts that are not conversation. The children should be encouraged to read as they talk and to show by their voices how they think the story characters felt as they were talking.)

"The rest of the class will listen. You need not keep up with the place in your book. Try to be a good audience as the other children read."

D. *Building word recognition skill.*

(The teacher may use an exercise similar to the following.) Directions: Draw a line around the word that answers each question. Use letter and sound associations along with context to figure out words you do not know.

(1) Which of these words might you use in talking about several bushes growing together?
clump pump stump

(2) Which of these words mean *close with a loud noise?*
clam jam slam

(3) Which of these words means *turn fast?*
spin thin grin

(4) Which of these words means to take something that is not yours?
squeal heal steal

(5) Which of these words means to look at?
square scare stare

(6) Which of these is something a king sits on?
stone throne shone

(7) Which of these do rivers do?
crow flōw throw

F. *Follow-up activities.*

(The lesson may not have a follow-up activity, though it often does. It may be any one of a number of activities. The children may find another story about raspberries and one may read it to the class. They may dramatize the story. Some may write another ending to the story. Others may draw a picture to illustrate the main action. Some of the children may find out more about raspberries and how they grow.)

*A Lesson Plan for "The Cremation of Sam McGee," Ninth Grade Reading Level*

The selection chosen to illustrate teaching comprehension skills through use of basal readers is "The Creamation of Sam McGee," by Robert Service. This selection, found in *Literature and Life*, published by Hough-

ton Mifflin Company, 1958, may be used at ninth grade level.

A. *Building readiness for the story.*

Before letting the students open their books to the selection, the teacher should build readiness and try to motivate them to want to read the poem. She may talk about the name of the poem, "The Cremation of Sam McGee." Introduce some of the words which may cause difficulty either in pronouncing them or in getting the appropriate meaning intended by the author. Some of the words which may be listed are: *cremation, mushing, parka, code, loathe, grub, derelict,* and *trice.* These words may be written on the chalkboard and pronounced and definitions given. Next, she should introduce the author, Robert Service. He was born in England in 1874 but grew up in Scotland. Although he lived some forty years in France, he spent some time in the Yukon, working as a bank employee. He wrote verses about gold miners, prospectors, and trappers he met while serving as a teller.

B. *Directed silent reading.*

Ask the students to turn to page 69 and read silently the title and the author's name. Have them read the short paragraph at the bottom of the page. This contains additional information about the author. Refer to the sketch at the top of the page and discuss the humor depicted by the artist. Have students read the colored section titled *Before You Read.* This section sets the stage by describing the locale of the poem and by introducing the main character, Sam McGee.

Setting up reading purpose: "Read the entire poem to find out what fantastic development occurred."

C. *Comprehension check and skill building.*

Get the students to respond orally to the following questions:

(1) What fantastic development occurred?
(2) Did you believe the author throughout the poem? Why? Why not?
(3) What is internal rhyme? Skim and find examples of internal rhyme.
(4) How does this add interest?
(5) How does Service make you feel the cold?
(6) What line provides a hint concerning the unbelievable ending of the poem?

Many types of exercises may be prepared by the teacher. She should be concerned with those skills for which the students show a need. The type of material read should be considered in preparing the exercises. Several types of comprehension skills may be developed after having read this

particular selection.

Examples of the different types of exercises are as follows:

*Recalling Facts:*

(1) Who wrote "The Cremation of Sam McGee?'
(2) Where did the action take place?
(3) Why did McGee believe he would die on this trip?
(4) What promise did Cap make McGee?
(5) What was the name of the derelict?
(6) Why did Cap take a hike while McGee was being cremated?

*Finding and Understanding Main Ideas:*

Find and write the one sentence in each paragraph that contains the central thought of that paragraph.

*Sequence of Events:*

Ask a student to retell the story.

*Understanding Details:*

Directions: Circle T if a statement is true; circle F if a statement is false.

T F (1) Sam McGee was cremated along the shores of the Yukon River.
T F (2) Cap was from Tennessee.
T F (3) It was Christmas Day when the last trip was made.
T F (4) Sam McGee told Cap he thought he would die this trip.
T F (5) Sam died three days later.
T F (6) It was the code of the trail to keep a promise.
T F (7) Cap used pieces of lumber found on the shore for the cremation of McGee.
T F (8) The ending of the story was sad.

D. *Word recognition skill building.*

Write the following words on the board: *cremation, parka, code, loathe, grub, derelict,* and *trice.* Have the students write a short definition for each word and use it in a sentence.

E. *Rereading for another purpose.*

The teacher or a student may read orally for the purpose of getting the students to catch the beauty of the rhythm. The feeling of the two characters should be emphasized to bring out the humor and dialogue.

The class may read together orally so they can enjoy the rhyme and rhythm.

F. *Follow-up activities.*

It may be suggested to the students that Service wrote other similar

poems and stories. They may wish to read some of these and compare rhyme and dialects used to tell the story.

The life of Robert Service may be read and discussed.

Reports may be written concerning the history of the gold rush in the Yukon River area, the life of the sourdough, or life in the mining towns.

# EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS OF COMPREHENSION IN CONTENT AREAS

**I.E.Aaron, Byron Callaway, and Hazel D. Simpson**

To evaluate the reader's ability to understand required reading and to supplement information furnished by standardized tests, the informal reading inventory is a valuable device for the classroom teacher. The teacher selects a passage of several hundred words from the text or other required materials that has not been read by the class. Following the reading, she evaluates the group's ability to read it. Such an inventory may be used with an individual, a small group, or an entire class.

*Rate.* In order to establish rate, the number of words in the selection must be counted. The teacher asks that reading begin at a specific signal. The teacher may have each person hold up his hand when he is finished in order to establish the time. He then notes the reading time for each student separately. Another approach is to write the time on the board as children are reading. Students select the last number that has been placed on the board as their reading time. Generally the teacher records only in half-minute intervals, as 3 minutes, 3½, 4, and 4½.

*Vocabulary.* To determine the suitability of the vocabulary, the teacher selects a group of words and works these into multiple-choice items. The number of words will depend upon the length and complexity of the selection, but at least ten words should be used. This word list should contain words that are peculiar to that subject and any general words that appear to be difficult. Checks of this kind often indicate that children need much work in the area of vocabulary. The incorrect possibilities should be reasonable, and part of them should be true meanings of the words but inappropriate in the context in which the words were met.

*Comprehension.* Comprehension should be checked by objective questions insofar as possible. Multiple choice items will to a greater degree eliminate guessing. However, some questions may lend themselves more to true and false, completion, or some other type of item. Enough questions should be included to evaluate comprehension on the selection used. Longer and more complex selections call for more questions than simple and short selections. Items should include several types of comprehension abilities, such as getting details, understanding main ideas, generalizing, and reading critically. These questions should also include items related to special reading skills, such as map and graph reading, when appropriate.

*Some examples.* Three examples on different levels and in different content areas are presented to show approcahes that may be used in pre-

paring such materials. The preparation of such inventories is time consuming, but they may be used with more than one group, such as the next year with children using the same text material. The first example deals with third grade science materials, the second with sixth or seventh grade geography, and the third with Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address," which may be in junior high or high school social studies or literature.

## AN INFORMAL READING INVENTORY IN SCIENCE

Inherent in the reading of science are several types of difficulty. The teachers should be aware of these difficulties and be prepared to meet them. Some of the difficulties encountered are: (1) background information, (2) terminology, (3) concepts, (4) special symbols, and (5) how to study. The teacher will want to determine the students' needs and may wish to prepare an inventory to determine the specific areas requiring improvement and/or adjustment in the level of difficulty of the materials used.

The material used to illustrate evaluating comprehension in the area of Science is taken from *Science Everywhere*, by Craig and Lemback, published by Ginn and Company, 1958, third grade level. The four particular areas inventoried in this test are: vocabulary, organization, location of information, and recall.

*Vocabulary:*

Directions: These words are from the selection you have just read. Read the words on the left; from the definitions on the right, select the word or group of words which best defines the key word. Refer to the selection if you wish to see how the words were used.

(1) change - a. money, b. transformation, c. shift, d. disappear

(2) evaporate - a. to diminish quickly, b. to enclose, c. to move, d. to dissolve

(3) rust - a. rapidly, b. hard, c. reddish brown coating, d. a bird

(4) humus - a. funny, b. a person, c. decayed material, d. a bone

(5) dissolve - a. disintegrate, b. substitute, c. decline, d. settle

*Organization:*

Directions: The unit you have just finished tells of the kinds of changes going on all the time. Some changes happen quickly while other changes go on slowly. Find the place in your book where changes are described and list them in two groups. Name the groups: (1) Changes Happen Quickly; (2) Changes Happen Slowly.

*Locating Information:*

(This exercise is considered one of readiness for locating information. The pupils need to know the order of the letters to be able to locate materials dealing with a particular topic.)

Directions: Arrange the following words in alphabetical order:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| changes | rust | melting |
| weather | iron | humus |
| evaporated | experiment | decay |
| dissolve | freeze | garden |

*Recall:*

Directions: Write the word *true* if the sentence is true; write the word *false* if the sentence is false.

.....(1) When water evaporates, it goes into the ground.
.....(2) Things with iron in them rust when they get wet.
.....(3) When water freezes, it changes to steam.
.....(4) Melting is a real change.
.....(5) Decaying changes plants and animals to humus.
.....(6) Some things change when they are put into water. This change is called evaporation.
.....(7) Paint will dissolve in water.
.....(8) Paper clips will rust.
.....(9) All changes happen quickly.
.....(10) There are many changes going on about us all the time.

## AN INFORMAL READING INVENTORY IN GEOGRAPHY

This inventory of comprehension skills is based upon a five-page subsection of Unit 13 in *Latin America, Africa, and Australia*, Ginn and Company, 1961. This geography text is designed for use in sixth or seventh grades. The first three pages of the selection consist of reading matter, and the last two present a map of Australia. The teacher may check on rate if he desires, or he may work only on comprehension. Pupils are told to read pages 349-353 in the text in order to remember main ideas and some of the details. As soon as they have completed the reading assignment, they are to respond to the inventory, which has been passed out to them prior to their reading.

Name: ..... Geography Date: .....

*Check on word meanings:*

Directions: Each word below has been used in the selection you have just read. From among the four possible definitions, select the correct meaning as it was used in this section. Draw a circle around its letter. You may refer to the text on this if you wish.

(1) latitude - a. wide margin, b. distance north or south of the equator, c. distance east or west of the prime meridian, d. tolerance.

(2) colonize - a. to capture, b. to recognize, c. to extend credit to, d. to settle.

(3) reserves - a. protected areas, b. troops available to support regular troops, c. goods held back, d. a jelly made from desert fruit.

(4) plain - a. not fancy, b. sparsely settled, c. rolling hills, d. level country.

(5) elevation - a. height, b. rising socially, c. supported, d. rising slowly.

(6) states - a. says, b. political divisions, c. countries, d. declares.

(7) federation - a. supreme government, b. banding together of group of states, c. surrendering to central government, d. a settlement.

(8) island - a. body of land surrounded by water, b. an isolated place, c. a body of land surrounded on three sides by water, d. a tropical paradise.

(9) equator - a. a hot and dry area, b. an imaginary line around the middle of the earth, c. the path of the sun, d. something that makes things equal.

(10) mainland - a. most thickly populated area, b. largest body of land on earth, c. a nickname for Australia, d. the major part of a continent.

*Check on comprehension:*

Directions: From among the four possible completions, select the one that best completes the sentence. Draw a circle around its letter.

(1) The best title for the section you have just read is: a. Australia's farming practices, b. some information about Australia, c. Australian aborigines, d. how Australia became prosperous. (MAIN IDEA)

(2) Australia has: a. four states, b. five states, c. six states, d. seven states. (DETAIL)

(3) Australia is: a. a large country with a small number of people, b. a small country with a small number of people, c. a large country with a large number of people, d. a small country with a large number of people. (MAIN IDEA)

(4) The latitude of Australia is most like that of: a. England, b. Mexico, c. Canada, d. the United States. (GENERALIZING)

(5) The land surface of Australia can best be described as: a. mostly mountains, b. a few very high mountains and many rolling hills, c. mostly rolling hills, d. mostly plains. (MAIN IDEA)

(6) The size of the population in Australia probably has resulted primarily from: a. a small rainfall in large areas of the country, b. heavy rainfall in the farming areas, c. the distance from other continents, d. policies of the government. (GENERALIZING)

(7) An aborigine is: a. a small rodent-like animal, b. a section of Australia, c. a small plant that grows in the Australian desert, d. a brown-skinned native of Australia. (VOCABULARY and DETAIL)

(8) Australia's flag was designed by: a. a lady who lived in England, b. a fourteen-year-old boy, c. a sheepherder, d. an art student. (DETAIL)

(9) Using the map on pages 352-353, locate the state you think is most heavily populated. It probably is: a. New South Wales, b. Queensland, c. Western Australia, d. South Australia. (GENERALIZING and READING MAPS)

(10) The authors have given us: a. mostly their own opinions about Australia, b. mostly facts about Australia, c. half facts and half opinions about Australia, d. only opinions about Australia. (CRITICAL EVALUATION)

## GETTYSBURG ADDRESS

### Abraham Lincoln

Fourscore and seven years ago our fathers brought forth on this continent a new nation, conceived in liberty, and dedicated to the proposition that all men are created equal.

Now we are engaged in a great civil war, testing whether that nation, or any nation so conceived and so dedicated, can long endure. We are met on a great battlefield of that war. We have come to dedicate a portion of that field as a final resting-place for those who here gave their lives that that nation might live. It is altogether fitting and proper that we should do this.

But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate – we cannot consecrate – we cannot hallow – this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract. The world will little note nor long remember what we say here, but it can never forget what they did here. It is for us, the living, rather, to be dedicated here to the unfinished work which they who fought here have thus far so nobly advanced. It is rather for us to be here dedicated to the great task remaining before us – that from these honored dead we take increased devotion to that cause for which they gave the last full measure of devotion; that we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain; that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom; and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth.

Name: ..... "Gettysburg Address" Date: .....

*Comprehension check:* Answer the following questions.

(1) Dedicated to those who died was:
   a. the proposition that all men are created equal.
   b. eternal gratefulness.
   c. a memory.
   d. a portion of field.

(2) The speaker was concerned with:
   a. the sacrifice of a few for the nation.
   b. the impressions made on the rest of the world.
   c. the possibility that the sacrifice made might be forgotten.
   d. the type of government to be preserved.

(3) One of the following was not considered by the author:
   a. All men were created equal.

b. Both sides were right.
c. The nation was conceived in liberty.
d. It was a new nation.

(4) The brave men were:
a the dead
b. the living.
c. the dead and the living.
d. all men since they are all created equal.

(5) The men died:
a. in vain.
b. not in vain.
c. to preserve the union.
d. to preserve the confederacy.

(6) The speech was delivered:
a. in memory of the dead.
b. at a great battlefield.
c. to bind the union together.
d. to prove that all men are created equal.

(7) This eulogy was written by .....

(8) The nation at the time was..... years old.

(9) The responsibility of the living was.....
.....

(10) The honored dead gave .....
.....

*Vocabulary check:* Write the letter preceding the correct meaning for each numbered word in the blank space to the left of the word. Select a meaning that fits the context of this material.

.....(1) fore - a. precede, b. four, c. beginning, d. in front of.

.....(2) forth - a. aggregation of bubbles, b. foam or saliva, c. between third and fifth, d. into view.

.....(3) conceived - a. born, b. pregnant, c. formed, d. operated by.

.....(4) dedicated - a. to give up, b. to inscribe a book to someone, c. to set apart for sacred purpose, d. in remembrance of.

.....(5) endure - a. to continue to exist, b. express, c. for a specific purpose; d. helpful to all concerned.

.....(6) proper - a. decent, respectable, b. proper, fitting, c. strict, d. foretelling useful events.

.....(7) consecrate - a. to make sacred, b. to improve, c. devote to, d. join together.

.....(8) hallow - a. honor, b. open, c. not deep, d. make meaningful.

.....(9) detract - a. devaluate, b. remove, c. hope for, d. take away.

.....(10) unfinished - a. completed, b. not perfect, c. not completed, d. lacking special finish.

.....(11) nobly - a. rapidly, b. contributing to, c. courageously, d. of noble ancestry.

.....(12) advanced - a. very old, b. helped, c. assisted, d. put forward.

.....(13) task - a. force to work, b. work to be done, c. burden, d. scold.

.....(14) devotion - a. duty, b. loyalty, c. faith lesson, d. worship.

.....(15) resolve - a. to separate, b. to deal with, c. to determine, d. to change.

.....(16) vain - a. arrogant, b. conceited, c. nugatory. d. no purpose.

.....(17) perish - a. remorse, b. opposition to, c. spiritual loss, d. be destroyed.

.....(18) score - a. tally, b. ten, c. twenty, d. to keep track of.

.....(19) proposition - a. statement, b. problem to be solved, c. business enterprise, d. to make advances.

.....(20) civil - a. polite, courteous, b. having to do with citizens, c. between nations, d. consideration of others.

# EVALUATION OF TEACHING PRACTICES RELATED TO READING IN CONTENT AREAS

**I.E.Aaron**

Self-evaluation is one technique for the teacher to use in taking stock of how effectively he instructs students in the subjects he teaches. Strengths and weaknesses are pinpointed. The following check list may be used by an individual or a group of teachers in assessing the extent to which fifteen recommended practices related to reading in the content areas are followed. Direction for school-wide improvement in teaching reading in the content areas may result from an entire faculty using the check list.

*Check List of Practices Related to Reading in Content Areas*

Subject: ..... Grade: ..... Teacher: .....

*Directions:* The fifteen practices listed below are often recommended in teaching effectively the special reading skills in the various content areas. Indicate the extent to which the practice is being followed in your class. Encircle the appropriate response from among the four given.

(1) Text material used is suited in difficulty to the reading levels of students.
Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(2) Students are encouraged through assignments to read widely in related materials.
Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(3) At the beginning of the year, adequate time is taken to introduce the text and to discuss how it may be read effectively.
Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(4) The teacher is aware of the special vocabulary and concepts introduced in the various units.
Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(5) Adequate attention is given to vocabulary and concept development.
Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(6) Provisions are made for checking on extent to which important vocabulary and concepts are learned and re-teaching is done where needed.
Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(7) The teacher knows the special reading skills involved in the

subject.

Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(8) The teacher teaches adequately the special reading skills in the subject.

Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(9) The course content is broader in scope than a single textbook.

Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(10) Assignments are made clearly and concisely.

Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(11) Students are taught to use appropriate reference materials.

Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(12) Adequate reference materials are available.

Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(13) Plenty of related informational books and other materials are available for students who read at below grade level.

Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(14) Plenty of related informational books and other materials are available for students who read above grade level.

Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

(15) The teacher takes advantage of opportunities that may arise to encourage students to read recreational as well as informational reading matter.

Almost always Most of the time Sometimes Seldom or never

# POSSIBILITIES FOR FOLLOW-UP OF CONFERENCE ON "TEACHING THE COMPREHENSION SKILLS"

**Doyne M. Smith**

Follow-up of the conference should involve three types of action: (1) a report of the conference to the schools represented, (2) an opportunity for the school faculty to discuss its own reading program in terms of ideas presented at the conference, and (3) an evaluation directed by the superintendent to see what has been done following the conference and what, if anything, it means in terms of improvement in the system's reading program. Each system or school should plan its own way of presenting ideas obtained from the conference. However, some possibilities that may be considered are presented here.

(1) The superintendent may call the teacher-representatives together and plan a system-wide presentation of conference activities.

(2) Each teacher-representative, in conference with the superintendent, may plan his own school presentation of the conference happenings.

(3) The superintendent may call together the principals, teacher-representatives, and the curriculum director to plan for a system-wide presentation of the conference activities.

(4) The superintendent may call together the principals and the curriculum director to plan how to make use of teacher-representatives in reporting on the conference.

(5) Teacher-representatives from several schools may plan a joint reporting session with each representative taking the responsibility of reporting on a particular topic.

(6) Teacher-representatives may circulate to interested teachers a copy of the proceedings, keeping a record of teacher interest in and use of the copy of the proceedings. Superintendents may obtain additional copies of the proceedings at cost.

(7) A short faculty meeting may be held in each school around each topic with the aim of passing on a report of that topic and then deciding what it means to the teachers and principal.

(8) The teacher-representative may present the suggestions for teaching comprehension skills and evaluate with the faculty the school's effectiveness in teaching these skills. This might give leads for further study or modification.

(9) The teacher-representative may demonstrate at a faculty meeting an informal reading inventory in a content area.

(10) A demonstration of the teaching of a directed reading lesson may be presented at a faculty meeting.

(11) The teacher-representative or the superintendent may ask all content-area teachers to respond to the "Check List of Practices Related to Reading in Content Areas." The results may be tabulated and used as a basis for schoolwide or systemwide in-service work.

(12) The superintendent will make plans to evaluate what happens in his system as a result of this conference.

The Georgia Department of Education would like your evaluation of this publication. Would you take a few moments to fill in and mail this self-addressed, pre-stamped form? Thank you.

1. Name of publication .....

2. How do you use this publication?

3. Based on your own experience, do you rate this publication

| | |
|---|---|
| ☐ very good | ☐ poor |
| ☐ good | ☐ very poor |
| ☐ fair | |

4. Did you find the material:

| | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|
| Easy to read and understand? | ☐ | ☐ |
| Organized for convenient use? | ☐ | ☐ |
| Attractive? | ☐ | ☐ |
| Complete? | ☐ | ☐ |

5. Other comments.

6. Your job title (teacher, curriculum director, principal, etc.)

.....

7. Signature and address (optional).

.....

.....

.....

8. Date .....

(STAPLE OR SEAL WITH TAPE)

(FOLD ON DOTTED LINE)

FIRST CLASS
PERMIT NO. 6146
ATLANTA, GA.

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL
NO POSTAGE NECESSARY IF MAILED IN UNITED STATES

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY —

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
PUBLICATIONS AND INFORMATION SERVICES
103 STATE OFFICE BUILDING
ATLANTA, GEORGIA 30334